Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat

SEPTEMBER 1986

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting September 5 : Mr.R.Court - Stereoscopic Slides of Native Orchids

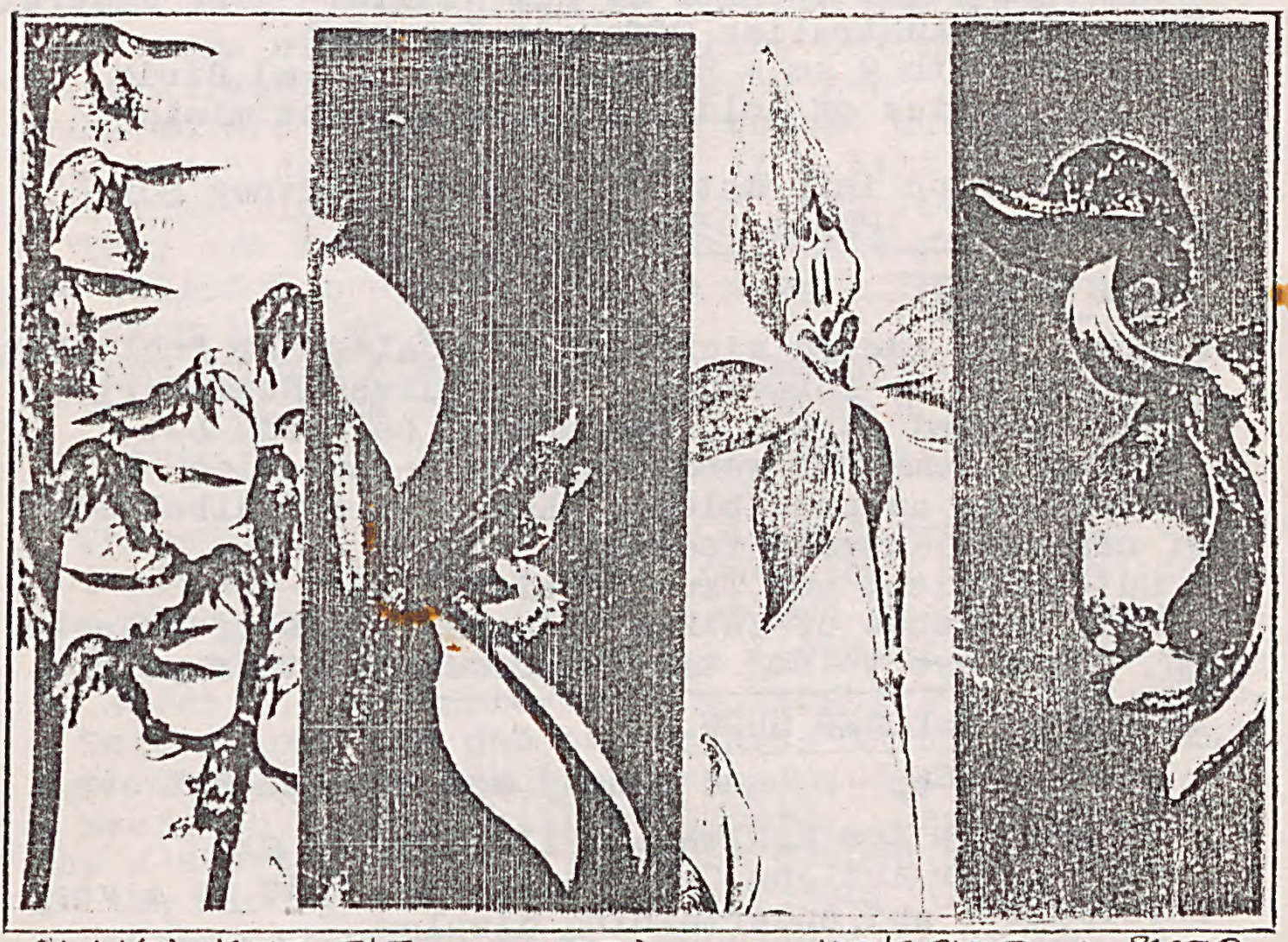
Meeting October 3: Mr.J.Clements - Animal Welfare

Excursion September 7 : Mt. Warrenheip - Mrs.P.Murphy

Excursion September 21 : Clunes and Mt.Beckworth Area Mr.G.Binns

Excursion October 5 : Newstead Area - Mr.J.Ebery

October 3-5 : V.F.N.C.A. gathering - Ballarat



CAN YOU NAME THESE ORCHIDS ? IDENTIFICATION - PAGE 8.

President : Miss H BURGESS 312210

Secretary : Mr B DOWLING 432425

Treasurer : Mrs F WILLIAMSON 327631

Editors : Mr G BINNS 332282

Mr L FINK 052 861319

Meetings, as specified, are held in the Art Building of the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street South, Ballarat, commencing 7.30pm

EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, Cnr. STURT and ARMSTRONG STREETS, BALLARAT, AT 9.30 am FOR FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 pm FOR HALF DAY

W.V.F.N.A. WEEKEND - October 17 - 19.

Maryborough F.N.C. will be hosting this weekend, centred around their Clubhouse, Timor Rd, Maryborough

An impressive programme has been planned and membersmay wish to drive out to all or some of the sessions.

Friday 17 (Oct) 8 pm- Update Edgar Prescott's lantern slides of Australian Orchids and early forest activities.

Saturday 18th 9am - Tour of Aboriginal Wells and other sites.

Saturday 1-30pm -Botany excursion to Paddy's Ranges.

N.B. Bus available (Bookings by Oct 12th) for the day $10.

6.30 pm W.V.F.N.C.A. Meeting

8.00 pm Guest Speaker Dr Jim Willis - 'The Natural History of Australias Offshore Islands'.

Sunday 19th 9 am - Excursion choice (a) Birds or (b) Relics of Golden Age and present mining activities.

Bookings or information: Eileen Courtney Box 62, Maryborough, Phone 054-612249.

KOALA SURVEY.

Members may record sightings of Koalas for inclusion in forms to be forwarded to the Survey Headquarters

The printed survey forms should be used, but critical items for recording are, - Location (as precise as possible)eg, Kms from and direction of nearest landmark feature;

Date; Habitat and Tree species;

Sex; Presence of Young; External signs of desease, eg, 'pink eye', 'wet tail', comments, other points.

ANGAIR WILDFLOWER SHOW.

Saturday Sep 27 and Sunday Sep 28 also Sat eve 7.30 Pm. In the Anglesea Hall McMillan St

A wildflower, Art and Craft display. This is a very informative and entertaining display.

For further details from the Secretary 4 McMillan St. Anglesea.

Admission Adult $2.00 Children 20 Cents, free if accompanied by parents.

AUGUST MEETING - RON KENNEDY-
"Sixteen Months in Antarctia".

Ron had been on a return trip to Antarctia, to Mawson on the Nella Dan, they had three helicopters to check on the passage for the ship. They were forced to tie up some 40 miles from the coast where their first visitors were penguins. The cargo was transported from the ship first, then the men.

Ron was one of the builders sent to construct new sheds and other buildings. One of his hobbies was growing pansies and other flowers and plants by hydroponics, he had tomatoes ripen there!

Mawson is a conglomerate of huts with flat roofs. When the snowis deep they are forced to use roof exits. Later when the Nella Dan returned it could come right in, and was unloaded with Larks (amphibious vehicles) as they had much heavy equipment.

The country travelled on the ice was very rough. Dogs were also used for trekking but must be treated carefullyand the different teams kept apart. The Huskies are chained and soon become cunning where the penguins are concerned. If a bird strays into the team lines the dogs have a free feed!

They are fed meat and 26 seals are permitted to be killed per season for the dogs. They have a working life of eight years.

Some of the atmospheric phenomena seen was like a very big ring around the sun with a solar pillar, one trip was to the Prince Charles mountains, a very desolate area.

There is no life in winter in Antarctia; all animals seem to disappear. Crevasses were one of the problems facing travellers and are most feared.

Crevasses are caused by ice movement and travel is safer in the valleys. The temperature was -25 c.

Meteorology was one of the main tasks carried out each day and the results transmitted to Australia.

Evenings have beautiful sunsets. On Midwinters day a short period of twilight occurs at midday as the midday sun is on the horizon. Then in midsummer it never sets. Moonlight is rather beautiful, sometimes with the sky a pink hue.

The ice appears blue but is actually as clear as crystal.

CONT.

The sea water temperature is 1.6 and there is marine life, with some of the star fish quite beautiful.

Cloud formations differ from day to day. One of the clouds shown was carbon dioxide, it was called nacre because of its mother of pearl colouring.

Another trip was for bird counting, Penguins and Skuas being common around the camp area. The Penguins walk in from the edge of the ice, sometimes many miles away, to the rookeries which are very noisy with young penguins. They are very comical looking as their feathers develop . Their enemies are the Skua Gulls which eat eggs and young chicks.

Other birds they saw were Giant petrels, Cape Pidgeons, Wilson Storm Petrel,and Snow Petrels. There were also Weddel Seals and their young nearby.

Other Seals seen were Leopard Seals, a very fierce animal with a long neck and Crabeater Seals.

They saw Emperor Penguins, they breed in July on the ice, with the egg on their feet. Some young were surveyed. Penguins use a creche system for their chicks when they go food hunting.

Some of the few plants seen were Lichens and Mosses growing in "gardens".

The aurora is seen at its best in Antarctia, Auroras are caused by Sun Storms. Stars appear coloured at night.

The Mountains seen were bare and barren but rather beautiful, as those that are depicted on the postage stamps show. Ice bergs are massive; one was tethered to the edge of the ice, then pushed out of the way with Larks when it caused a hindrance .

This was a very interesting night and Ron was appropriately thanked

L.F.

VICTORIAN FIELD NATURALISTS ASSOCIATION

Spring get Together Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th Oct.

This will be based in Ballarat at the Old Ballarat Inn, the venue for the evening meeting at 7 pm with Phil Day. Geologist, speaking on 'The Devils Kitchen'.

Saturday - Excursion to the Bird Observers Clarkedale Reserve, meet at the Rangers Cottage 1.20 pm, and also to the Flora Reserve later.

Sunday To the Devils Kitchen in the morning.

It is hoped that some of our members will attend.

MILDURA W.V.F.N.C.A. WEEKEND

The eleven members who journeyed to 'Sunraysia' for the weekend of Aug 8-10 experienced a most enervating few days of weekend sunshine and observations of dry country flora and fauna. These were complemented by the good company of representatives the nine clubs in attendance and the commendable programme or ganized by the Sunraysia Naturalists Research Trust.

Saturday was spent on the N.S.W. side of the river at Trentham cliffs, in state forest reserves of mallee eucalypt, casuarina and native pine stands which provided excellant observations to suit all interests.

The botamists, and others, found interest in such plants as the Bitter Quandong (in fruit), Geijera parviflora - Wilga one of the most outstanding small weeping trees to be seen - Casuarina cristata -Belah-, Eucalyptus largiflorens - Black Box -, E. incrassata, Heterodendrum oleifolium -Cattle Bush -, Grevillea huegelii and Pimelia microcephala also Pittosporum phylloides to name a few.

The dry-country bird species provided a field day for the 'twitchers'with close sightings of White Browed Tree Creepers, Black Backed Wrens, Variegated Wrens, Gilbert Whistler, Apostle Birds, Red Capped Robin, Mulga Parrot, Ringneck Parrot, Yellow Plumed Honeyeater, Whitefronted Honeyeater, and Crested Bellbird - to name a few.

Other excursions to the drainage ponds in saltbush environment west of Merbein, and to Hattah on Sunday provided observations of other colourful 'gems' of the area such as potted Harrier, Orange Chat and White Winged Wren. Avocets were also evident in large numbers. Red and Blackfaced Kangaroos and a Gecko represented the animals.

A bonus for Ballarat members was the illustrated talk by Enid Borschman on the Saturday Evening.

Enid had been to Mawson base as cook and her pictures and documentary proved to be an enjoyable sequel to our own syllabus item of August when Ron Kennedy described his antarctic experiences.

G.B.

AUGUST EXCURSION - KOALA SURVEY TECHNIQUES -

A good gathering of members met at Lyndsay Fink's house for a pre excursion briefing, and some slides, given by Chris Porter. We heard about the health problems of Koalas and the purpose of the excursion.

Some of the slides showed how to identify male and female, what "wet bottom" looks like, and one of pinkeye.

Then onto the Brisbane ranges, first to Anakie Gorge where a pair of Podargus (frogmouths) were spotted on a dead limb.

The walk through the gorge was quite pleasant, following the Stoney Creek. About 12 Koalas were recorded and only one with any noticeable sign of (wet bottom).

The gorge has many birds and honeyeaters were plentiful, including the Yellow Tufted.

Of interest were the tunnels cut through the rock for the passage of the water pipeline, these were cut by out of work miners from the Steiglitz gold fields in the 1870's when the Lower Stoney Reservoir was also built.

We had lunch at the picnic ground and then went to track 21 where we saw some very fine specimens of Correa reflexa, Grevillea chrysophea and three Orchids Acianthus reniformis,Pterostylis nutans and P. nana. There was plenty of Hakea sericea in flower throughout the park.

Eight Koalas were surveyed in this gully, all looking healthy.

There were many birds honeyeaters and Crimson Rosellas among them, then home after a very good day's outing. We will conduct another Koala count when we go to the Bamganie Bush later in the year.

L.F.

GENUS EUCALYPTUS (Family Myrtaceae)

Box Group (see June News Sheet.)

Species	Tree & Bark	Adult Leaves.	Juvenile l.	Buds & Fruit
E. melliodora " Honey scented " Yellow Box	Medium size Bark -box type, grey yellow- or red- brown. Bark often yellowish.	Petiolate, alternate. Prominent venation with remote intra-marginal vein.	Petiolate, alternate. Prominent venation.	Inflorescences usually axillary and simple - about 7 buds. Slender peduncles and buds with pedicels. OPerculum conical or beaked. Fruits pedicellate- disc descending. Valves often black.
E. Aromaphloia Scent Bark	Small to med. sized tree. Bark rough and persistent, Coarsely furrowed. Young bark often scented.	Petiolate, alternate	Sessile or very short petioles, opposite for several to many pairs. Elliptical to ovate.	Inflorescences us. 7 flowered, peduncle short, sl. angular. Buds with short pedicels. Operculum conical. Fruits sessile to shortly pedicellate, hemispherical, valves prominent.

Peppermint Group (See June News Sheet.)

E. Dives	Small to med. sized tree. Bark rough- peppermint type. Grey or grey- brown.	Petiolate, alternate Not densely reticulate Peppermint smell when crushed.	Sessile, opposite for many pairs Ovate to heart shape Sometimes sl. connate.	Inflorescences often 11 or more buds. Latter pedicellate. Operculum hemi- spherical or conical. Fruits pedicellate, cup shaped to hemispherical. Valves 3-4 at rim l level

- to be continued -

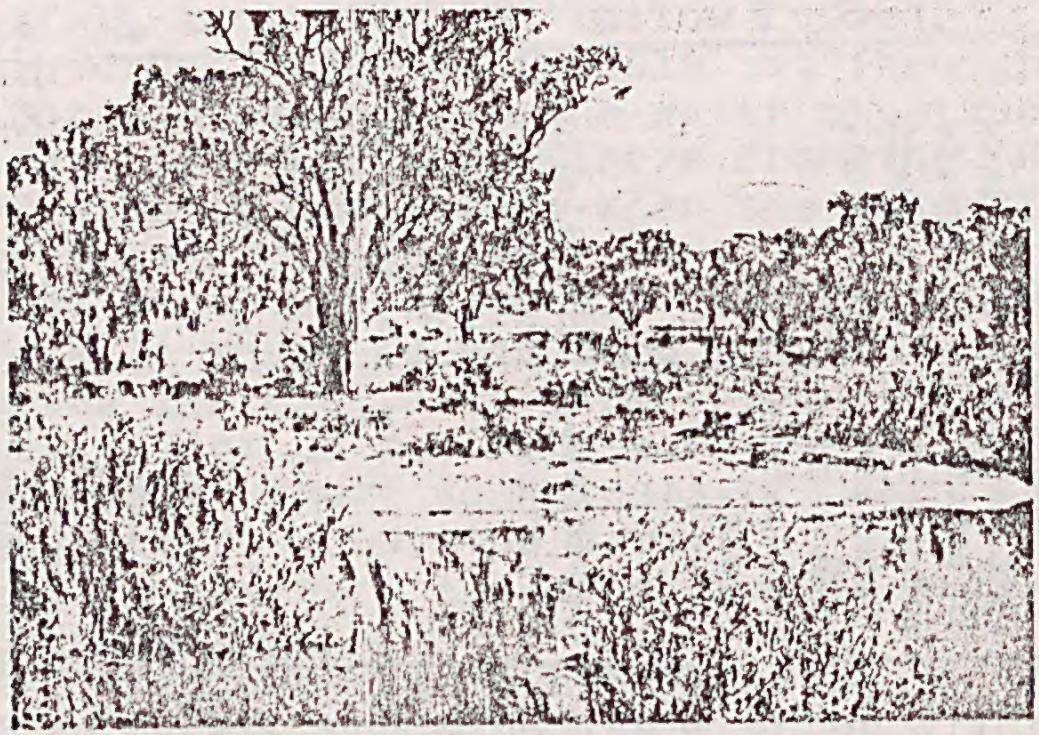
GOVERNMENT CONTRACT FOR CLIFF BEAUGLEHOLE

The State Government has provided a contract which will enable Cliff Beauglehole of Portland to complete the four major studies of the remaining L.C.C. study areas over the next two years. This will mean that the series of volumes on Distribution and conservation of the Vascular Plants for all areas of Victoria will be completed by 1988.

We congratulate Cliff on this achievement, after years of devoted work, and suggest that members who do not posses copies of completed lists should aquire them "while stocks last". It is unlikely that reprint will take place.

Single copies are $8 posted or $35 for 5 posted

President Helen has some volumes on hand,for sale.



Black Box (*E. largiflorens*)

Note

The October 3rd meeting, will be 'ANIMAL WELFARE', the speaker Mr.J. Clements. Please note in your Syllabus.

Orchids (Page 1) - Hairy Leek Orchid, Parsons Bands, Waxlip, Flying Duck Orchid (major